

Inner City Coalition of Calgary Society
Candidate for Alderman George Chahal
Ward 3
www.votegeorge.ca
718-0005

1) Affordable, Low Income Housing

We believe the City must increase its options for solution to the housing squeeze.
Yes

Question

What policy changes or practical action such as leveraging existing funding can you initiate for Council to address this issue in the long term and the short term?

To tackle the issue of affordable housing we must begin by creating healthy and livable communities. Many market based initiatives can occur with good planning principles such as creating a diversity of housing types within communities and increasing densities which leads to more choice and greater affordability to a wider range of people.

New developments should also incorporate secondary suite options or flex housing options which would result in more rental housing options and mortgage help for homeowners. Provide incentives to developers in the form of density bonuses or developer set asides to increase affordable housing supply. This should be mandated through housing policy that a percentage of housing units built to go to affordable housing.

Within in Calgary there are many illegal and nonconforming suites that provide affordable rental options for residents. Established areas within the city should be reviewed to determine the percentage of illegal or nonconforming suites currently existing. The review should also explore whether opportunities exist for more secondary suite development, such as reviewing the design of the established communities so that they would be able to handle the additional traffic. By working collaboratively with the community and through a public discussion and consultation process determine the best way to legalize non-conforming and illegal suites in these identified areas ensuring that existing and new suites are safe, affordable and conform to all building code requirements.

Focus on Public Private Partnerships to create more affordable housing, by working collaboratively with industry and government and by helping build the capacity of non-governmental organizations, faith and ethnic groups to obtain and build affordable non-market housing.

2) The Transportation Dilemma

We believe that better planning tools such as land use and building regulations, and new engineering standards are required for an ecologically sustainable future.

Yes

Question

Are you willing to take a leadership role and implement the Calgary Transportation Plan (Go Plan) and its principles of balance growth strategy?

Yes.

As a city we need to be proactive by strengthening relationships and working collaboratively with our neighboring municipalities to create a regional transit policy.

As our city as become a major domestic and international destination, we require a more efficient transit link to the airport. Where LRT is unavailable, rapid transit routes need to be in place help move people quickly. To break automobile dependency, reduce road congestion, and have a healthy environment for future generations, we must develop a world class transit system to move our residents.

It is important for our city to promote and use smart growth development. All transit stations should be based on transit oriented development (TOD) principles which promotes higher densities around transit stations with mixed use development. Established communities and transit stations should be reviewed to determine opportunities for higher densities and mixed use around stations. By working collaboratively with the community and through a public discussion and consultation process determine the best way and methods to implement transit oriented development around existing stations.

Through public private partnerships we need to work with industry representatives that are willing to try innovative and sustainable practices in creating a sustainable Calgary.

As alderman I will actively lobby and work with our various levels of government to tie land use objectives and capital investment together to fund and implement planning projects such as transit. I will fight to expand the LRT within our city and appropriate levels of service so residents travel more efficiently as development occurs and which supports transit oriented development.

3) Tax Fairness (Property taxes, user fees, and service charges)

We believe the current system is unfair to a wide range of Calgarians and has negative planning implications for the City as a whole.

Yes/No

Question

What policy initiatives would you implement to mitigate the imbalances of Market Value Assessment and ensure taxation fairness?

In favor of looking at options to protect low and fixed income residents,
In favor of reviewing Market Value Assessments Process (MVA) to ensure fairness

4) Environment and Sustainability

We believe that better planning tools such as land use and building regulations, and new engineering standards are required for an ecologically sustainable future.

Yes

Question

As a Municipal Leader, what types of policy have you or would you initiate to reduce our environmental impact and maintain our quality of life?

A key initiative in tackling many of our environmental issues deals with our built environment. We must promote and encourage smart growth development such as transit oriented developments & pedestrian oriented development which is an essential part of creating healthy and livable communities. We must work collaboratively with our development industry to ensure conservation of land and encourage environmental protection and greening of our communities.

The city and the development industry need to partner together to be more innovative and encourage environmental sustainability. This can be done by promoting and utilizing green infrastructure and buildings through programs such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). A newer initiative for community development is LEED Neighborhood Development (LEED ND). In new multifamily or high-rise developments promote and encourage installation of green roofs and vertical gardens. As a city we should promote, encourage and provide bonus incentives for greener options in developments.

As alderman I would support and promote recycling initiatives to ensure our landfills are not being unnecessarily filled. While I support recycling initiatives I am concerned about the impact the additional costs have on fixed income or lower income individuals and families, and on the lack of a program for multifamily housing. We need to promote throughout the city the importance of our environment and recycling and I would lobby the provincial government for financial support and program integration across municipalities. I would also

push the city to create an action plan and targets for the reduction of municipal emissions.

5) Democratic Process & Policies

We believe that the financing of the election campaigns at the municipal level should be subject to the same financial scrutiny of federal and provincial elections.

Yes

Question

What election financing policies would you champion to provide limits, checks and balances against actual or perceived preferential treatment?

To ensure participation and accountability within our municipal structure, as a city we must look at implementing campaign financing rules. As alderman I will support such initiatives to ensure that elected municipal officials are accountable to its citizens. Such initiatives would include:

- 1) Campaign contribution limits
- 2) Spending limits
- 3) Quarterly public disclosure of campaign contributions made to elected officials
- 4) All campaign accounts held by elected officials should be publicly disclosed

Within my own campaign we have taken initiatives to implement campaign financing rules. Upon completion of this election I will have a better understanding of the costs associated in running an effective campaign. We will be publicly disclosing on our website prior to the election day all our campaign contributors.